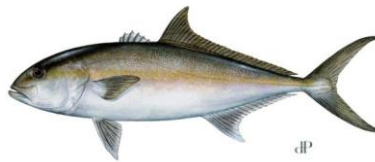


**Gulf of Mexico Greater Amberjack Fishery
Frequently Asked Questions
December 2012**



When was the recreational and commercial annual catch target (quota) changed for greater amberjack?

- Amendment 35 established a new recreational quota of 1,130,000 pounds whole weight (pounds) and a new commercial quota of 409,000 pounds that became effective on December 13, 2012.

How is the fishery for Gulf of Mexico greater amberjack currently managed?

- Recreational greater amberjack sector
 - 1,130,000 pound quota (when quota is met or projected to be met, the fishing season closes).
 - 30-inch fork length minimum size limit.
 - Daily bag limit of one fish per person with a zero bag limit for the captain and crew of for-hire vessels.
 - June 1 to July 31 closed season.
 - Accountability measures temporarily reduce the following year's quota if the annual catch limit (ACL) is exceeded in the previous year.
- Commercial greater amberjack sector
 - 409,000 pound quota (when quota is met or projected to be met, the fishing season closes).
 - 36-inch fork length minimum size limit.
 - March 1-May 31 closed season.
 - Accountability measures temporarily reduce the following year's quota if the annual catch limit is exceeded in the previous year.
 - Trip limit of 2,000 pounds ww.

How does NOAA Fisheries determine the recreational and commercial greater amberjack quotas are met?

- Recreational greater amberjack landings are obtained from three data sources:
 - Marine Recreational Information Program, including the For-hire Charter survey;
 - Southeast Fisheries Science Center Headboat survey; and
 - Texas Parks and Wildlife Department charter and private/rental angler creel survey.
- Methods for projecting when the recreational quota is met can be reviewed at: <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sf/GrouperSnapperandReefFish.htm>.
- In season landings can also be viewed at: http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable_fisheries/acl_monitoring/index.html.

- Commercial greater amberjack landings are obtained from fish dealer landing reports, which are provided to NOAA Fisheries every 2-4 weeks. In-season commercial landings for greater amberjack can be viewed at: http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable_fisheries/acl_monitoring/commercial_gulf/index.html.

When will the recreational sector for Gulf of Mexico greater amberjack close in 2013?

- In 2012 the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Council) implemented a recreational fishing season closure from June 1 through July 31 of each fishing year.
- This seasonal closure is anticipated to prevent the annual catch limit from being exceeded and allows fishing to continue to be open through the end of the year.
- NOAA Fisheries does not project the 2013 recreational quota of 1,130,000 pounds for greater amberjack will be met in 2013.
- NOAA Fisheries will monitor recreational landings to determine if the quota is met.
 - If the quota is projected to be met, recreational anglers will be notified as soon as possible regarding any adjustments to the fishing season.

When will the commercial sector for Gulf of Mexico greater amberjack close in 2013?

- NOAA Fisheries will monitor commercial landings throughout the season to determine if the quota is met.
- If the quota is projected to be met, commercial anglers will be notified as soon as possible regarding any adjustments to the fishing season.

What happens if the annual catch limit (quota) is exceeded?

- When the commercial or recreational harvest exceeds the annual catch limits in any given year, the amount of the overage is deducted from that sector's annual catch limits and annual catch targets the following year.

What is the 2013 Annual Catch Limit for Greater Amberjack?

- The 2013, 481,000 pound commercial annual catch limit and annual catch target will be reduced by the 2012 overage, after the 2012 landings data have been analyzed and made official.
- The recreational annual catch limit will be 1,299,000 pounds, while the annual catch target will be 1,130,000 pounds.